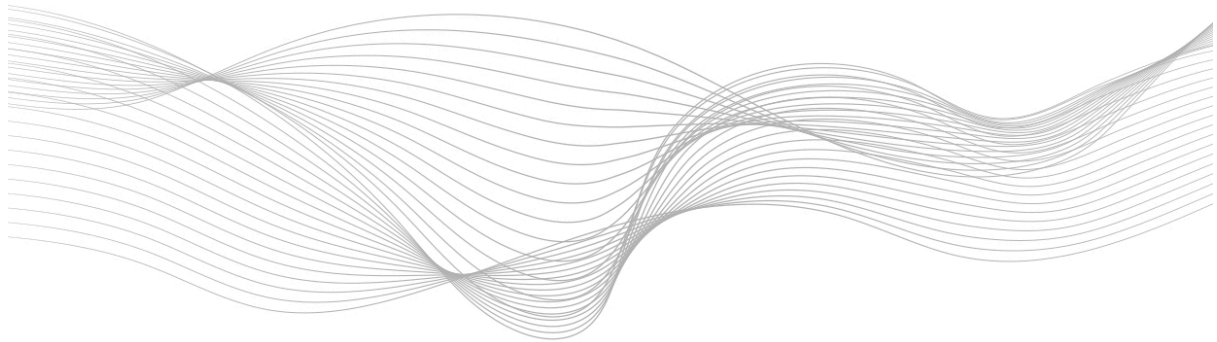




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SECURITY INDEX

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Verification

of nuclear arms control
and nuclear disarmament:
experience, prospects,
and new ideas



Verification is a key and indispensable element of nuclear arms

control and nuclear disarmament. Any substantive discussion on the future of strategic stability, nuclear arms race limitation, and the prospects for nuclear disarmament becomes pointless if it fails to address verification. To answer the question of what verification should look like in the future, leading Russian and foreign experts analyze the experience of the implementation of bilateral agreements between the Soviet Union/Russia and the United States and look at various international mechanisms. For the first time, Russian experts offer a comprehensive assessment of the approaches proposed by the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification (IPNDV) and other new initiatives in this field.

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HIGHLIGHTS

- Verification is a key element of arms control and disarmament. Article VI of the NPT contains a commitment to end the nuclear arms race and pursue nuclear disarmament, as well as to negotiate a treaty on a general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control – in other words, a disarmament that includes reliable verification instruments.
- The SALT I Treaty formalizes the principle of verification that relies on “national technical means of verification” (NTM). The elimination of an entire class of delivery systems under the INF Treaty and real reductions of other delivery systems and warheads under the START I Treaty required the development of a more complex and reliable verification system. The INF was the first nuclear disarmament mechanism to include inspection activities. The START I verification system included NTM, 12 different types of inspections, continuous observation of mobile ICBM production process, information sharing (including a system of notifications and telemetry exchange), as well as demonstrations and cooperative measures. When the parties developed the New START Treaty, they used the START I verification mechanism as a template, but made it less costly and easier to implement.
- We already have a wealth of experience of multilateral verification of nuclear nonproliferation, including of course the IAEA safeguards system. As part of the CTBT treaty, which has

yet to enter into force, the international community has built a verification mechanism that is completely unique and unprecedented in terms of its scope. There are also examples of WMD elimination programs that included international verification. Nevertheless, at this time, there is no ready-to-use mechanism of disarmament verification that could verify the disposal of all nuclear weapons components.

- Since 2007, there have been several international projects that aim to develop cooperative mechanisms of nuclear disarmament verification involving nuclear weapon states (NWS) and non-nuclear weapon states (NNWS). These initiatives include the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification (IPNDV) and the QUAD project. According to their participants, these projects help to fill the pause in the absence of any real disarmament talks, preserve international cooperation skills and discipline, build confidence, strengthen responsibility, and stimulate the launch of fresh talks on nuclear disarmament. One of the main challenges facing such mechanisms is to achieve effective verification without requiring access to sensitive information.
- While most Russian experts are ready for dialogue and recognize the scale and usefulness of such endeavors, they also warn against overblown expectations in terms of these projects' feasibility. They argue that no verification system can be universally comprehensive and applicable to all types of agreements. Designing verification mechanisms without consideration for various strategic factors will not help to create the conditions required to launch a multilateral nuclear disarmament process.
- Russia remains committed to the conventional, legally binding instruments: namely, international agreements and treaties. These instruments make it possible to develop an appropriate verification apparatus and coordinate the scope and modalities of future cooperation. Verification is one of the greatest advantages of legally binding mechanisms, and no amount of external monitoring can replace it.



Evgeny **BUZHINSKIY**

Chairman of the PIR Center Executive Board; Vice President of the Russian Council for International Affairs; Head of the Center for Political and Military Studies at the International Politics Department of the Moscow Lomonosov State University



Lars **van DASSEN**

Director, Office for International Relations, the Swedish Radiation Safety Authority



Andrey **MALOV**

Associate Professor at the Department for International and National Security, Diplomatic Academy of the Russian Foreign Ministry; Member of the PIR Center Advisory Board



Sergey **OZNOBISCHEV**

Head of the Military-Political Analysis Section, Primakov National Research Institute of World Economy and International Relations of the Russian Academy of Sciences (IMEMO RAN); Professor at the Moscow State University of International Relations (MGIMO) under the Russian Foreign Ministry



Pavel **PODVIG**

Senior Research Fellow at the UN Institute for Disarmament Research



Gennady **PSHAKIN** (1942-2019)

Head of the Center for Nonproliferation Analysis (Obninsk, Russia); Chief Research Fellow at the Leypunsky Institute of Physics and Power Engineering; former IAEA safeguards inspector; member of the UN Group of Experts on the elimination of the Iraqi nuclear weapons program



Sergey **RYABKOV**

Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation



Alexander **SAVELIEV**

Chief Research Fellow, Primakov National Research Institute of World Economy and International Relations of the Russian Academy of Sciences (IMEMO RAN)



Albert **ZULKHARNEEV**

PIR Center Consultant; Research Fellow at the Center for Global Trends and International Organizations, Institute for Contemporary International Studies, Diplomatic Academy of the Russian Foreign Ministry

ABOUT

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